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Social Studies

Social Studies

Amazing Animals



Genre	Comprehension Skills and Strategy	Text Features
Narrative nonfiction	• Sequence • Draw Conclusions • Predict	• Captions • Glossary

Scott Foresman Reading Street 2.2.1



scottforesman.com



by Lisa Fields
illustrated by Rich Stergulz





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Editorial Offices: Glenview, Illinois • Parsippany, New Jersey • New York, New York
Sales Offices: Needham, Massachusetts • Duluth, Georgia • Glenview, Illinois
Coppell, Texas • Ontario, California • Mesa, Arizona





In almost every community, people and animals live together. Some animals, such as farm animals and pets, depend on people for food, shelter, and care. In return, animals give people friendship and joy.

That's not all that animals do for people! Some animals, called service animals, provide people with special help. These animals can find missing persons, guide people who cannot see, and do many other important jobs. These are very special animals.



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Photograph 16 Photo Researchers, Inc.

ISBN: 0-328-13249-7

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Guide Dogs

Hello! My name is Max and this is my friend Peg. Peg cannot see. I am Peg's pet and also her special helper. I am called a guide dog because it is my job to guide Peg wherever she needs to go. I am Peg's eyes!

Today Peg needs to go food shopping. She holds onto my harness as I lead her safely down the front steps and onto the sidewalk.



We will have to cross two busy streets. Peg trusts me to know when it is safe to cross the street. Whenever there is a **hazard** that could cause Peg to fall or get hurt, I let her know. Then I lead her around the danger.

Usually animals are not allowed to go into food stores. That rule doesn't apply to me or other guide dogs. We have special permission to enter the store and guide our owners as they shop.



Therapy Dogs

My name is Sundance and I am a visiting dog, or a **therapy** dog. People call me a therapy dog because it is my job to help sick children and adults feel better.

I go with my owner to hospitals and nursing homes five days a week. I look forward to Thursday most of all. This is the day we visit Children's Hospital.



When we get there, I'll visit my new friend Joey. We have the best time together. He gives me great belly rubs, and I lick his hand until he laughs out loud.

Dogs like me are not the only kind of visiting animals. When we go to hospitals and nursing homes, we see lots of rabbits, cats, fish, and many other animals. Once we even saw a llama!





Search and Rescue Dogs

I am Steve. I live with my owner and other dogs high up in the mountains of Colorado. Lots of people come to ski. Sometimes we are called to search for and **rescue** skiers and people who are injured or lost in the snow. We are search and rescue dogs.

Our owner trained us when we were young dogs. We need to be very **courageous**. We have a responsibility to be on duty whenever people need us.

My job is to find people who are lost in the snow. Search and rescue dogs can also help find people who are buried under fallen buildings or who get lost hiking in the woods.



Search and rescue dogs find people who get stuck in the snow.



Service Monkeys

Hi there! I'm Dexter and I'm a Capuchin service monkey. I am trained to help people.

You're probably thinking, *Can such a small animal do big jobs for people?* Yes! I was chosen because I am small. My tail works almost like a third hand.

Marissa spends most of her day in a wheelchair. She cannot use her arms or legs. I have been trained to help her do everyday **tasks**, such as turning lights on and off. Thanks to me, Marissa can live and work from her own home.

Service monkeys learn how to flick light switches.



Marissa **depends** on me in many ways. I can comb her hair or put a compact disc in the player. I can even turn the pages of her book.

Living with Marissa is not all work. I have the best human friend in the whole world! We play together and have fun.



Therapy Horses

Hello there! I am Phantom, a therapy horse. I help people learn to balance, walk, and even talk.

Therapy horses stay calm and cool, no matter what happens. That's a good thing because sometimes the people who ride us don't have good balance or might make loud noises. Horses that are not calm or well trained might get easily excited or frightened. But not therapy horses like me! We do our best to help people have an enjoyable time.



My handler lets me choose the people who will use me as their therapy horse. First, the person and I get to spend some time together. Next, the person learns how to **groom** me. Last, I let the person get on my back.

Some of my special riders have learned how to walk by feeling how I walk. Other riders have better balance because they have learned how to stay steady in my saddle.

All service animals have been specially trained to help people live their lives better. Service animals are great helpers to people who really need them.





Now Try This

What special services do you do?

You have learned that service animals can make life better for some people by doing some tasks very well. These tasks are very important responsibilities for these special animals.

We all have responsibilities, and we can all help others. Can you think of things you have seen your friends or family do that would help make life better for members of your community?



Here's How to Do It!

Think about the communities you belong to, such as your family, your neighborhood, your school, and your town or city.

1. Make a list of these communities.
2. Next to each community that you have listed, write two different ways you can show responsibility in that community.
3. When you have finished, pick what you think you would be best at.
4. Ask a parent or an adult to help you learn the best way to take on this responsibility. Ask them if they can show you where to start!





Glossary

courageous *adj.*
very brave.

depends *v.* relies
on.

groom *v.* to comb
and clean an
animal.

hazard *n.* a danger.

rescue *v.* save from
harm or danger.

tasks *n.* activities.

therapy *n.*
something people
do to become
healthier.



Reader Response

1. You read on page 13 how a person and a therapy horse become partners. Make a chart like the one below to tell what happens first, next, and last.

↓
↓

2. On pages 4 and 5 you read how Peg's guide dog gets her to the store to buy groceries. Can you predict what Max will do when Peg completes her shopping?
3. What kinds of *hazards* might Peg find when she goes out shopping?
4. What information on pages 10 and 11 gives you clues about what these pages might be about before you read them?

